

CD-ROM Review

Herbal Remedies CD-ROM

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This electronic database on herbal remedies contains information on more than 1 100 plants and 1 200 herbal drugs. The information is accessible through the following five sections: drugs, plants, substances, glossary and literature. These sections are easily navigated via the start-up page, as well as simple icons (buttons) in the toolbar.

Information on each plant in the database can be accessed by searching for the scientific or common name. Each monograph comprises general information and plant usage, etymology of the plant name (description of the origin of the scientific name), a botanical description (plant, flowers, fruit, etc.), habitat, flowering and harvesting times (if applicable), botanical synonyms, vernacular (common) names, herbal drugs derived from the plant and a photograph (in most cases).

From the plant monographs (botanical information), it is easy to switch to the drug-related information on the plant. The drug monographs comprise information on usage, dosage, modes of action, use restrictions, characteristics, substances, scientific names and synonyms, vernacular

names, indications, safety classification, Commission E monograph, references to related scientific literature and pharmacopoeias, quality ranking, usage in food and evaluation of efficacy. The section on substances contains a list of substances with their related CAS number(s). The glossary section contains important botanical, medical and pharmacological terms with concise explanations.

In the literature section, it is possible to search for a specific title from the reference list contained in the database. The list of references can be filtered by author name, or any search string referring to the title or journal. This is certainly a useful feature of the database, although repetitive references occur for multi-authored publications.

This database combines a wealth of information from a variety of sources, including a number of pharmacopoeias. The information is easily accessed and can be printed out if necessary. The CD is quickly installed, and requires MS Windows (95, 98, NT, 2000, XP, ME) with a minimum of 64 MB RAM and minimum screen resolution of 800 x 600 pixels.

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